

The Purpose of Military Power

The Army must always have capabilities to **compel** any adversary to do what he otherwise would not do of his own free will. These same capabilities also contribute to our ability to **deter** adversaries, to keep them from acting inimically to our interests in the first place. The employment of military forces without necessarily engaging in combat to **reassure** allies and friends promotes stability and contributes to our ability to influence international outcomes. Finally, our armed forces use their capabilities to **support** domestic authority in times of natural disaster, civil disturbance, or other emergencies requiring humanitarian assistance.

You can fly over a land forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it and wipe it clean of life but if you desire to defend it, protect it, and keep it for civilization you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman Legions did, by putting your young men into the mud.

T. R. Fehrenbach
This Kind of War

Using military power for these purposes ultimately requires putting the American soldier in harm's way. The presence of Army troops on the ground constitutes a statement neither an opponent nor the American people can ignore. When America decides to obtain results by employing military power, putting its soldiers on the ground is as unavoidable today as it ever has been.

